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## [H.R. 2880, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2015](#)

### FLOOR SITUATION

On Wednesday, February 24, 2016, the House will consider [H.R. 2880](#), the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2015, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 2880 was introduced on June 24, 2015 by Rep. John Lewis (D-GA), and was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, which ordered the bill reported by unanimous consent on February 3, 2016.

### SUMMARY

H.R. 2880 redesignates the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site in the state of Georgia as the “Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park,” and replaces the current boundary map with a map of a proposed boundary revision dated June 2015.

### BACKGROUND

On October 10, 1980, Congress passed Public Law 96-428, establishing Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, in order to: “...protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Junior, was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried...”<sup>1</sup>

The original boundary of the Historic Site was generally centered on a portion of Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia that includes Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthplace, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and the immediate neighborhood.<sup>2</sup> The legislation also designated a Preservation District that extended protection beyond the immediate neighborhood surrounding Dr. King’s birthplace and Ebenezer Baptist Church to include the broader Sweet Auburn community’s commercial district.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See [Natural Resources Committee Hearing Memo on H.R. 2880](#)

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

Since 1980, Congress has twice modified the boundaries of the Historic Site and Preservation District (1992, [Public Law 102-575](#) and 2004, [Public Law 108-314](#)).<sup>4</sup> H.R. 2880 further modifies the boundaries to include the Prince Hall Masonic Temple. The Prince Hall Masonic Temple is where the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) established its initial headquarters on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia in 1957.<sup>5</sup> This historic and distinguished civil rights organization was co-founded by Dr. King, who also served as its first president. The SCLC has now relocated to another building on the same block. Including the Prince Hall Masonic Temple within the unit's boundary permits the National Park Service to provide technical assistance to the building's owners with respect to repairs, renovations, and maintenance that would preserve its historic integrity.<sup>6</sup>

H.R. 2880 also redesignates the Historic Site as a Historical Park. The titles given to various areas managed by the National Park Service vary widely, but Congress has generally tried to give similar titles to areas that contain certain common features. National Historical Parks are commonly areas of greater physical extent and complexity than National Historic Sites, which may only contain a single building.<sup>7</sup>

### **COST**

A Congressional Budget Office estimate is not available at this time.

### **STAFF CONTACT**

For questions or further information please contact [Robert Goad](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 6-1831.

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*